

Mendocino National Forest Project Approval

Programmatic Agreement among the U.S.D.A. Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region (Region 5), the California State Historic Preservation Officer, the Nevada State Historic Preservation Officer, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Regarding Processes for Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for Management of Historic Properties by the National Forest of the Pacific Southwest Region (Amendment 1: Regional PA 2018)

Undertaking: Hammerhorn Salvage and Restoration

Case No.: R2020050800018

To: Upper Lake and Covelo District Planner

Project Description: The project area is located approximately 17 miles northwest of the town of Covelo, California. It is located upslope and to the East of the Middle Fork of the Eel River. The project is entirely within the Mendocino National Forest boundary. All project actions are confined to Mendocino National Forest Land. The USDA-Forest Service, Mendocino National Forest, Covelo Ranger District is proposing a project located approximately in the center of the 2020 August fire on approximately 11,402 acres, all of which were burned during the August Fire. Treatments within the project area are planned on only 250 acres. The proposed actions include removing merchantable dead trees, non-merchantable fuels treatment, site prep & reforestation. These treatments are intended to reduce current and future fuel loading, reduce wildfire risk, improve resiliency to fire, and protect legacy components of the project area. Infrastructure restoration at Hammerhorn Campground and reservoir are also planned as part of this project.

Commercial Treatments

The Mendocino National Forest Land Resource Management Plan (LRMP) provides direction to schedule salvage harvests to utilize merchantable timber killed or seriously damaged by fires (LRMP Pg. IV – 38). To capture economic value, removal of commercial and non-commercial sized fire-killed or fire-injured trees will be identified by using the Marking Guidelines for Fire-Injured Trees in California (Smith et al. 2011). The LRMP Management Prescriptions for this project include RX 4 – Minimal Management, RX 6 – Late-Successional Reserve, and RX 7 – Timber Modified. For the purpose of this project a commercial size tree is described as being a tree with a 14” diameter at breast height (DBH) or larger.

Fuels/Site Preparation

Fuels reduction actions shall be applied to fire killed or injured trees within the treatment units that are not suitable for inclusion in commercial treatments. Fuels treatments will be applied to trees that depending on market conditions may have value as biomass products, but do not have a commercial value as lumber products. Application may occur as a combination of prescribed burning, hand or mechanical harvesting, hand or mechanical piling, chipping, pile burning, or biomass removal. To reduce activity fuels, other surface fuels, and maintain them in the desired condition, prescribed fire

may follow treatments. The mechanical equipment used for these operations can operate on slopes including and up to 35% slope.

Reforestation & Release

After implementation of the commercial treatments, and the fuels/site preparation treatments, the units are slated for reforestation. These areas are dominated by high fire severity burn patches that resulted in 98 percent or greater tree mortality or vegetation coverage loss, as measured by basal area from pre-fire conditions. Because of the large size of these patches and the intensity of the fire, few live trees are available to naturally reseed the area.

Recreation

Post fire restoration of the Hammerhorn Campground and Hammerhorn Lake recreation area is proposed within the scope of this project.

Proposed site restoration activities proposed for the Hammerhorn Campground are;

1. Replace burned timber vehicle barriers throughout campground.
2. Replace three burned kiosks (2@ entrance, 1@trailhead with new frames 48x48 bulletin boards and one way sign at entrance.
3. Replace burned exhaust vent on vault toilet #1.
4. Replace burned support column and wheelchair ramp safety edging on vault toilet #2.
5. Decommission the current water system by removing all above ground infrastructure. All underground infrastructure will be left in place.
6. Replace burned 155' ADA trail puncheon that leads to the lake.

Proposed site restoration activities proposed for the Hammerhorn Lake Recreation Area are;

1. Replace the two burned trail bridges with lower cost and more fire resilient open bottom culverts, removal of the old concrete footings & debris.
2. Replace the two burned ADA accessible fishing platforms along with Interpretive Signs (including mounting frame, hardware, and shipping) & removal of the old concrete footings & debris.
3. Replace timber barriers along the ADA accessible portion of the trail (original barrier size unknown due to burn severity).
4. Stump hole repair within the trail.
5. Repair of the approximately ½ mile of water line infrastructure leading from Hammerhorn Creek.

Type of Survey: Intensive

Historic Properties Identified: Nine archaeological sites lie within the project APE. Six of these were newly recorded in 2021. Three sites have been determined not eligible for the NRHP and require no protections. Two of these (FS 05-08-56-751, and FS 05-08-56-752) are the historic Hammerhorn Campground and Lake facilities which were submitted to the SHPO for expedited evaluation in 2021. SHPO concurred that neither sites were eligible for the NRHP so there are no protection measures required. The six remaining historic properties are un-evaluated and are being treated as eligible properties (see Table 1).

Standard Resource Protection Measures: The project implementer will be notified (SPM 1.3(2)) of the location of each of these sites to insure their protection. The unevaluated sites will be flagged for avoidance (SPM 1.1) prior to implementation and monitored (SPM 1.5) after to ensure that protection measures were followed. The felling and removal of hazard trees may be possible in some cases as long as ground disturbing activities are confined to previously disturbed areas (SPM 2.2(a)(2, 4)) and MNF Heritage staff are present (SPM 1.5) to insure Class 2 protection measures are followed. Project implementers shall contact Heritage staff prior to implementation to ensure that sites have been flagged (SPM 1.5) and protection measures are understood. Any Class 2 SPMs require implementation monitoring.

If new archaeological remains are located during project implementation, project activities will halt until the district archaeologist can assess the situation.

Table 1. Approved Standard Protection Measures: RPA: Appendix E

Sites	Trinomial	1.1	1.1(a)	1.3(2)	1.4	1.5	2.0
05-08-56-381*	MEN-1664H			X			
05-08-56-383	MEN-1780	X		X		X	2.2(a)(2, 4)
05-08-56-384	MEN-1781	X		X		X	2.2(a)(2, 4)
05-08-56-751*	New site			X			
05-08-56-752*	New site			X			
05-08-56-753	New site	X		X		X	2.2(a)(2, 4)
05-08-56-754	New site	X		X		X	2.2(a)(2, 4)
05-08-56-755	New site	X		X		X	2.2(a)(2, 4)
05-08-56-756	New site	X		X		X	2.2(a)(2, 4)

* = Evaluated, not eligible for the National Register

1.1 = Flag and avoid

1.1(a) = Flag, avoid, and use buffer zone (enter size)

1.3(2) = Notify project planner, manager, and/or implementer (site locations)

1.4 = Protect through project modification, redesign, or elimination

1.5 = Monitoring (**during** project implementation)

2.0 = Class II: On-site Historic Property Protection Measures (cite category)

3.0 = Class III: Historic Structure Treatments (cite category)

This undertaking has been approved in accordance with stipulations in the *Programmatic Agreement among the U.S.D.A. Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region (Region 5), the California State Historic Preservation Officer, the Nevada State Historic Preservation Officer, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Regarding Processes for Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for Management of Historic Properties by the National Forest of the Pacific Southwest Region (Amendment 1: Regional PA 2018)*. The undertaking may be implemented as planned for historic properties provided any specified Standard Resource Protection Measures are also adopted. No additional measures are needed to identify or protect historic properties unless the undertaking's Area of Potential Effect (APE) is modified in ways that may have an effect on historic properties. If the APE is so modified, additional review and approval by the Forest Archaeologist is required.

/s/ Michael Dugas

11/08/2021

MICHAEL DUGAS

Date

Forest Archaeologist